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Racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related forms of intolerance, follow-up to and implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action

Written statement* submitted by the Organization for Defending Victims of Violence, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[21 August 2018]

* Issued as received, in the language(s) of submission only.

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Item 9: Islamophobia in Europe

Islamophobia is a concept that fears, prejudges and illogically discriminates Islam and Muslims. The majority of communities in the world have deeply rooted problems in the way they approach foreigners, racial and religious minorities and also how they treat followers of religions. By acknowledging the existence of these injustices we hope that through transparency of these incorrect views and beliefs and raising awareness of all communities, be witness to the improvement of racist and Islamophobic views. Following the 9/11 attacks, Islamophobia became more intense. Insulting the Koran, the prophet of Islam and other Islamic holies became the top of governments and media Islamophobic policies. The policies lead to sufferings of Muslims living in various regions of the world including Europe.

France has the largest Muslim minority population among European countries, however, Muslims in this country, are deemed as aliens. The report published by the Coordination against Racism and Islamophobia (CRI)[1] can be highlighted which shows that out of 576 Islamophobic attacks in 2016, out of which 38 cases include physical attacks and hate speech against Muslims.

In Austria, the new government has adopted new policies with regards to migration and creation of further restrictions on Muslims. The research from the Documentation and Consultancy Center for Muslims said the number of attacks against Muslims reached 253 in 2016[2], compared to 156 in 2015. In 2017 there were 309[3] Islamophobic attacks recorded which compared to 2016 it had a 21 percent increase. In Austria, 98 percent of Islaophobic attacks were against women[4], and approximately 62 percent of all cases took places in public and open or semi-open places, which the verdict of the EU Supreme Court on the prohibition of hijab may be the basis of these attacks.

In Netherlands, there were reports of 364 incidents of discrimination against Muslims in 2016[5] and 42 percent of Muslims have reported that they have experienced discrimination in their lives[6]. In Norway 27.8 per cent of the people dislike Muslims, and overall 19.6 percent of the population would dislike having Muslims as neighbours or in their circle of friends. In 2017, 14% of Muslims experienced harassment in Norway[7].

In Germany, alone, there have been approximately 1000 attacks against Muslims, and mosques[8].

Recommendations:

1 – In view of the occurrences and the daily increase in Islamophobia and harassment of Muslims in European countries and the United States, ODVV calls upon the Human Rights Council to take necessary steps to identify the causes and repercussions and work towards the elimination of these types of problems that Muslims face.

2 –ODVV calls upon the Human Rights Council to issue a resolution to create a monitoring mechanism such as an independent expert and provide consultation services for the assessment of the current Islamophobia situation, with regards to existing challenges and also the best methods to confront this rising trend, for the fight against Islamophobia.

3 –ODVV calls upon the Human Rights Council to request the Special Rapporteur on Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Intolerance to submit a report on the Islamophobic and hate speech of world's politicians.[9]

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[1] European Islamophobia Report 2016
[2] . https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/01/austria-muslims-fear-cast-threat-security-180114064057435.html
[3] . http://muslimnews.co.uk/news/islamophobia/austria-islamophobic-attacks-muslims-increase-21-percent/
[4] . https://www.state.gov/documents/organization/281124.pdf
[5] . https://www.islamophobiaeurope.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/EIR_2017.pdf
[6] . https://www.islamophobiaeurope.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/EIR_2017.pdf
[7] . https://www.islamophobiaeurope.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/EIR_2017.pdf
[8] .https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/almost-1000-attacks-muslims-reported-germany-2017-report-761148992
[9] Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance(https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Racism/SRRacism/Pages/IndexSRRacism.aspx)